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THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
JOHN BROWN:
A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

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Wesleyan Methodist Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

On Sunday Evening, December 4, 1859.

BY REV. JOHN GREGORY,

Pastor of the Church.

Published by Request of the Congregation.

PITTSBURGH:

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Family of
William Lloyd Garrison
July 18, 1899.

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Published by the Board of Christian Education.

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OF THE

SERMON.

"ALL THINGS HAVE I SEEN IN THE DAYS OF MY VANITY: THERE IS A JUST MAN THAT PERISHETH IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THERE IS A WICKED MAN THAT PROLONGETH HIS LIFE IN HIS WICKEDNESS." Ecclesiastes vii: 15.

THE subject chosen for this evening's discourse is one of rapidly-increasing interest and importance. A great event has transpired; greater in its significance and in its foreshadowings than any that have for many years past been inscribed upon the pages of the nation's history. The whole country—North, South, East, West—has been convulsed as with the throes of a mighty earthquake. Politicians of all grades have been forced to lose sight for a moment of their schemes and aspirations, and to look on in wonder at the strange drama passing before their eyes. Preachers, laying aside for a time their doctrinal disquisitions, have been constrained to give their views of the wondrous event which has so aroused the interest of their congregations. Lecturers, turning away from the inviting paths of poetry and fiction, have been induced to speak in plain and sober prose of the great "Lesson of the hour." Soldiers, tired of the monotony of peace, and eager to prove their skill and valor in war, have hurried hither and thither, have marched and counter-marched; and military displays on a most extensive scale have been the order of the day. And the people, everywhere, of all ages, and sects, and colors, and conditions, have been absorbed in discussions, and disputes, and prophecies about a subject with which they feel themselves to be intimately concerned. In the camp and in the grove, in the Court and in the Meeting-House, in the market and in the work-shop, on the street and by the fireside, in every place has the momentous event been the all-absorbing topic of conversation.

And what is the cause of these innumerable discussions, this raging excitement, this intense anxiety to hear the latest news? Has a foreign army invaded our shores? Has the dreaded pestilence again made its appearance? Has some vast and populous city been suddenly destroyed by fire? No! None of these calamities have happened. What then? A MAN, a brave old man, a true-hearted, strong-nerved American citizen, with eighteen valiant followers, has, quite unexpectedly, invaded the great and ancient Commonwealth of Virginia! By the magic of his keen, glaring

eye, and by the vigor of his stout right arm, he has spell-bound two thousand chivalrous Southrons, has kept them at bay for twenty-four hours, and has, after a desperate struggle, only yielded at last to the horde of disciplined troops, which came rushing in from the surrounding towns in answer to the cries of the affrighted populace! But why, when the surviving invaders are sabred and secured, and the smoke of the battle has cleared away, why does the commotion amongst the terrified citizens still continue? Why should the panic spread over the whole of the Southern States, and the excitement rush throughout the land, gaining strength at every step? Has any claim been disputed? any darling object assailed? any species of "property" endangered? Yes! The "peculiar institution" has been greatly imperilled! Slavery, and not merely the Old Dominion, has been invaded! Dagon, the pet idol of the South, has been openly threatened with destruction; and the weak knees of the Philistines have smitten one against another, when the perils which fear and cowardice had conjured up, stood in dread array before them! "The great goddess Diana" has been openly despised, and the "the craft" by which their wealth was made has been in great danger of being "set at naught." That explains the mystery and the extent of the excitement!

"Though the structure of a tyrant's throne
Rise on the necks of half the suffering world,
Fear trembles in the cement; Prayers, and tears,
And secret curses—sap its mouldering base,
And steal the pillars of allegiance from it;
Then, let a *single arm* but dare the sway,
Headlong it turns, and drives upon destruction."

An honest, God-fearing old man, one who "loved righteousness and hated iniquity," had for many years noted the fact that a certain class of his fellow-creatures had, in an evil hour, "fallen among thieves." And, robbed of all their God-given rights and privileges, scarred and deformed at the will of their cruel task-masters, they found no deliverer to undertake their cause! The recreant Priests of the nation, intent on theological controversies, busied with trifles, but "omitting the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy and faith"—though they had seen again and again the sad condition of their wounded brethren, had "passed by on the other side." The herd of unfeeling Statesmen, anxious to mount to high office and to secure national plunder, and fearing to meddle with or denounce odious laws and shameful compromises, had also "passed by on the other side." And the plaintive, wailing cry of the bruised and stricken ones was echoed throughout the land. Then the sorrow of the old man was stirred within him; and "while he was musing the fire burned." He thought of his duty to his God, of his duty to his neighbor. And the question, "Who is my neighbor?" rang incessantly in his ears. Then, from the swelling tide

of human woes, and from the Throne of the Eternal, came bounding back the answer:

*"Thy neighbor? It is he whom thou
Hast power to aid and bless;
Whose aching heart and burning brow
Thy soothing hand may press!
Thy neighbor? Yonder toiling Slave,
Fettered in thought and limb,
Whose bones are all beyond the grave—
Go thou, and ransom him!"*

And he resolved to go and help his crushed and bleeding brethren; to deliver them from the burdens, too heavy to bear, which had so long bowed them to the ground; and to bring them out of the house of worse than Egyptian bondage.

Of this man, and of his actions, I am now to speak. In memory of this "good Samaritan" I have resolved to preach a "Funeral sermon." It is not often that a funeral sermon is preached over one whose spirit goes to the eternal world from the GALLOWES—over one who was charged with the crimes of "treason, robbery and murder!" But, notwithstanding the malice of his enemies, and the silence of those who profess to be his friends, I rejoice that I have this opportunity of bearing testimony to the truth, and of paying my feeble tribute to the memory of that honest, valiant, noble man, who "counted not his life dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy." I stand not here to advocate deeds of violence and bloodshed, or to vindicate war in any of its forms. Neither, on the other hand, do I intend to condemn the acts of the deceased, or to impugn the motives which led him to those acts. He has already been arraigned before one human tribunal, and now his soul has gone to appear in the presence of the righteous Judge of all the earth. But I shall speak of him as I find him; review his character in the light of reason and revelation; and then leave you to decide whether I am successful in proving him, in the language of the text, "a just man that perished in his righteousness." And may Heavenly grace descend into our hearts, so that we may profit by the subject now before us, and be led fervently to pray, "Let me die the death of the righteous!"

As to the LIFE of the deceased, a short and necessarily imperfect sketch only can be presented. No authentic memoir has yet been published, and all we know of him is from the items which have appeared in the various journals of the day. But I have gathered enough to serve as an outline for the present occasion; enough to show that the lamented hero came of good old stock; and that amid all the vicissitudes of what was indeed "a chequered life," he proved himself to be a worthy descendant of worthy ancestors, one of nature's true noblemen, and a credit to any name, or family, or age, or nation.

JOHN BROWN was born in Litchfield county, Connecticut, in the year 1800. He was the sixth in descent from Peter Brown, one of the "Mayflower" Pilgrims, who landed at Plymouth in 1620. John's father, Owen Brown, was a contractor to the army during the war of 1812. His grandfather was a Captain in the army of the Revolution. John Brown's ancestors were farmers—sturdy, honest yeomen, ready at all times to serve their country, and to stand up for the right. And John himself seems to have paid more attention to farming than to anything else—though he was at various times a surveyor, a tanner, a wool-dealer, and latterly a **WAR-RIOR**. Before his appearance in the far West he had resided in Connecticut, in Ohio, in Pennsylvania, in Massachusetts, and in New York. Then, in 1855, he made his first appearance in Kansas. A public meeting was in progress at Ossawatimie, at which the politicians of the territory were carefully adjusting a series of resolutions so as to suit every variety of "Free State men." A motion was offered in favor of excluding all "negroes" from the territory. This called out John Brown, who at once scattered alarm and discord in the council, by asserting the manhood and rights of the colored race, and by expressing his anti-slavery opinions in a manner not at all soothing or acceptable to the audience. Brown went to Kansas, it seems, not to settle there, but to assist his sons; and, it may be, to aid in defending that territory from the encroachments of the Slave power. He soon began to suffer for his steady opposition to tyranny. His assailants plotted against him, and he experienced many losses and much ill-treatment at their hands. One son was killed in cold blood, and while unarmed! Another son was seized, while ploughing, loaded with chains, and driven for many long and weary miles, with such malignant cruelty as to destroy his reason! His house, and those of his sons, were destroyed by fire! The women of the family were insulted; a price was set upon the old man's head; and every indignity that Missouri barbarity could devise was heaped upon him! But he was himself preserved, almost miraculously, from the schemes of his enemies. He seemed to bear a charmed life, and he was "a wonder unto many." Then, seeing the desperate state of affairs, he resolved to fight the battles of Freedom. He determined to be a hero and a leader in the warfare between Truth and Error, the struggle between Right and Wrong. "Like Napoleon, he had unbounded confidence in his own destiny and resources. Like Cromwell, he trusted in God, and kept his powder dry." He prayed fervently, dealt blows lustily, and thanked God heartily for victory! For two years he resisted bravely the minions of Slavery, and his name became a terror to the whole race of "Border Ruffians." His hand was against every pro-slavery man, and every pro-slavery man's hand was against him. Having resisted the intruders at every point, having also been instrumental in rescuing numerous slaves, and knowing that Kansas was

secured to freedom, Brown removed to the neighborhood of Harper's Ferry, in Virginia. He had, it seems, formed a design to enter the State at that place, to rescue large numbers of the slaves, and to escape with them, from time to time, to the mountains. At intervals he visited other localities and enlisted recruits, especially from amongst those who had fought with him in Kansas. The sequel is well known. His seizure of the Arsenal; his long-protracted defence against such fearful odds; the loss of his two sons and most of his gallant followers; the bayonet and sabre wounds inflicted on him with such savage cruelty by his pursuers; his capture, trial, imprisonment and death—are facts too familiar to be recounted here in detail. By his heroic but fatal adventure he has become “the observed of all observers;” and by his deeds of daring he has rendered “Harper's Ferry” as renowned as ancient Thermopylæ! By his noble life and glorious death he has won imperishable fame! And as the friends of the oppressed look with sad hearts but strong hopes into the hero's grave, and then turn away to engage with renewed zeal in the struggle against tyranny, they may well exclaim:

We will think of *thee*, O brother, and thy sainted name shall be—
In the blessing of the captive, and the anthem of the free!”

The time is not yet come, even for John Brown's friends, to understand thoroughly, to present clearly—in all its minute details—the CHARACTER of that wondrous man. Such differences of opinion are maintained with reference to him, and prejudice has so warped the mind and distorted the vision, that it is not an easy task to attempt an analysis of his character, or to group together the broken and scattered facts available for the purpose in hand. By one class of persons he is regarded as a monster, a criminal, a murderer; by another, a fanatic or a madman; and by another, and I trust not an inconsiderable class, he is esteemed a hero, a saint, a martyr! And yet from the facts already stated, and from others now to be named, we shall be able, I trust, to gain some insight into his true character, and to point out some of the more prominent features which distinguished him.

John Brown was A BRAVE MAN! To this fact all, even his enemies, will testify. So great was his courage, so marvelous his strength, that it seems as if some long-buried hero of the olden time had risen from his silent grave to astonish the world with deeds of mighty prowess! His was not the bragging, tinsel bravery which spends itself in words! His was bravery in action! He went to work with a will; and he rested not till he had accomplished what he thought to be his duty, no matter how severe the task should prove. His daring deeds in Kansas, his conduct at the Arsenal, his fortitude in captivity, his demeanor on the scaffold, all prove him to have been “a mighty valiant man.” He evidently believed that, engaged in the right cause, battling on the Lord's side, “one

would be able to chase a thousand, and two to put ten thousand to flight." And when we hear of the panic he caused in Virginia and the surrounding States, we cannot but think he was not far astray in his belief. It was the consciousness that he was on the side of truth, of justice, of God, that nerved him for his unequal conflicts. It was the love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things," that sustained and soothed him amid all his trials and persecutions, enabling him to look upward "with an unflinching trust," and to approach his grave exclaiming, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

John Brown was A MAN OF STERN INTEGRITY! His conscientiousness in all his transactions was apparent to every one with whom he came in contact. His honesty in his religion, in his business, and in his battles, had become proverbial, had distinguished him wherever his lot was cast. Much of this unbending integrity seems to have been inherited; for it was often remarked, "Whoever can get the promise of a Brown of that breed considers himself secure." He was at all times, and in all the relations of life, trustworthy, truthful, promise-keeping. It was said of him that "in Kansas he was the great living test of principle in the politicians; the more corrupt the man, the more he denounced John Brown." And it was well known that he would not gather around him, if he could prevent it, any but honest and upright men. He was heard to say, "I would rather have the small-pox, the yellow-fever and the cholera, all together, in my camp, than a man without principle." This devotion to principle, this reverence for truth and uprightness, furnishes us with the key to his philanthropy, solves the mystery that would otherwise enshroud some of his actions, and explains why he was a terror and a scourge to evil-doers—why he sacrificed his life for the sake of the oppressed.

And this leads me to the consideration of what was, amid all his other virtues, the crowning excellence and glory of his character—that feature by which we may the more readily test his claim to be considered a servant of God. I refer to his true and tried PHILANTHROPY, his pure and unselfish BENEVOLENCE! This gives him a higher claim to our sympathy and esteem than any other plea that can be set up. He had a stout arm, a strong will, an honest intention, but, more than all, A TRUE AND LOVING HEART—a heart whose every pulsation beat in unison with the great heart of humanity! This prompted him to relieve the distressed, to pity those "who had no comforter"—to stand up for those who had no helper. His sympathies were world-wide. He aimed at impartial justice to all, and was the generous friend of all, no matter of what color, or creed, or condition. He was a firm believer in that famous, though incendiary document, "the Declaration of Independence"—that inval-

uable legacy of our forefathers, which the captors and murderers of John Brown have so completely ignored! He was also a consistent believer in the Golden Rule! He made it his rule of action, and he carried out its principle according to the dictates of his own conscience. When questioned as to the principle by which he justified his acts at the Ferry, he promptly replied, "By the golden rule." "I hold," said he, "that that rule applies to all who would help others to gain their liberty. I pity the poor in bondage that have none to help them; that is why I am here." And in his famous speech at the close of his trial, how forcibly did "the old man eloquent" set forth his belief. Said he:

"I see a book kissed, which I suppose to be the Bible, or at least 'the New Testament, which teaches me that 'all things whatsoever I would that men should do to me, I should do even so to them.' 'It teaches me further, to 'remember them that are in bonds as 'bound with them.' I endeavored to act up to that instruction. I 'say I am yet too young to understand that God is any respecter 'of persons. I believe that to have interfered as I have done, as 'I have always freely admitted I have done, in behalf of His de-'spised poor, no wrong, but right. Now if it is deemed necessary 'that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of 'justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, 'and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights 'are disregarded by wicked, cruel and unjust enactments, I say, let 'it be done!'"

And which one of us, my hearers, would dare, after listening to so glorious a declaration, to condemn his conduct, or to sully his memory with a single stain of reproach? Rather let those sublime words of his, "I AM YET TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND THAT GOD IS A RESPECTER OF PERSONS," be engraved deeply upon our hearts, inscribed in letters of gold on every house, repeated at every fire-side, and echoed throughout the world! Let us rather thank God that his trusty servant was enabled, by Grace Divine, to bear such plain testimony in that Southern Court-House, and amid the jeers and insults of that tyrannical crowd!

It has been charged that John Brown was ferocious and unmerciful, especially during his Kansas career. But when we remember that not only his family, but all who knew him, bear testimony to his uniform kindness of heart; and that to the poor everywhere, to friends in distress, to those who became his prisoners, to each and all, he was attentive and compassionate, we may at once repel the charge, and assert that he was, pre-eminently, A HUMANE AND MERCIFUL MAN! He not only sympathized with suffering and sorrow, but he did what he could to relieve those who were in need. But to do this, and to give his sympathy a practical shape, he daily denied himself. To his credit it may be mentioned that he had never used ardent spirits or tobacco! And he never suffered himself or

his family to wear expensive clothing, constantly urging as his reason, "Let us save the money and give to the poor." It was said of him that "amid all his persecutions he never perpetrated an act of wanton or unnecessary cruelty." When, only a few days before his death, the charge of cruelty was mentioned to him, he replied, "Time and the honest verdict of posterity will approve of every act of mine to prevent Slavery from being established in Kansas. I never shed the blood of a fellow man except in self-defense, or in the promotion of a righteous cause!"

But to sum up the remaining features of John Brown's character, it will be sufficient to affirm that he was, according to unbiased testimony, and, judging from his words and deeds, sincere in his profession of religion, that he was a true servant of the Most High—A ZEALOUS AND DEVOUT CHRISTIAN! In making this assertion I am, I know, treading on delicate ground; flatly contradicting the old man's enemies, and arraying myself against not a few who ought to be his friends. I know that even in the North, numerous preachers, yea, even Doctors of Divinity—to their shame be it said—have denounced and most vehemently protested against what they call "this misplaced sympathy for John Brown." I know too that many Pharisaical professors of religion have lifted up their hands and opened wide their eyes in holy horror at the bare thought of admitting his claim to be "a brother in Christ." I know also that the editor of a Pittsburgh paper, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, took great care, on the evening of the execution day, to stigmatise the murdered man as "an old fanatic;" and to assert that Governor Wise had "succeeded in making a hero, a martyr, and a saint out of one who was never intended for either." But, knowing this opposition, and in the face of these contrary statements, I dare affirm that, so far as I am able to judge, JOHN BROWN WAS A RIGHTEOUS MAN! That he was a hero, needs no proof; that he was a martyr, let what I have said suffice to show; and that he was a saint, long before the erratic Governor interfered in his behalf, is at least capable of tolerable proof. Granted that he was, if you please, a saint fashioned somewhat after the Old Testament pattern; a warrior Christian of the Cromwellian breed; a servant of God "born out of due time," and shaped after the ancient Puritan model. But this does not alter the case, and should not bias the mind against him, nor exclude him from the sympathy of the true-hearted. Are we prepared to class Moses amongst the unbelievers because he went down to Egypt to punish the task-masters, and to bring his brethren out of the house of bondage? Shall we reject Joshua, and Gideon, and Sampson, because of their violent attacks on the heathen nations? Shall we give up David as a reprobate because he slaughtered the hosts of the Philistines, and "turned to flight the armies of the aliens?" John Brown has evidently, though in a very slight degree, imbibed the spirit and followed the example of those dis-

tinguished Old Testament saints. And after studying their lives, and reading the explicit command, "Fight the Lord's battles," he has been guilty of interpreting the words literally, instead of metaphorically; guilty of rushing on the errand before consulting some trusty old commentator, or seeking the advice of some orthodox divine! This is apparent from the manner in which he talked to and rallied his friends whilst in Kansas. He said on one occasion: "Talking is a national institution, but it does no good for the slave. It is an excuse very well adapted for weak men with tender consciences. But my ideas of duty are far different. I hold that the slaves are prisoners of war; the tyrants have taken up the sword, and must perish by it." And in replying from his prison to the kind letter of a Quaker lady, he wrote: "You know that Christ once armed Peter. So also in my case, I think he put a sword into my hand, and there continued it so long as he saw best, and then took it from me. I mean when I first went to Kansas. I wish you could know with what cheerfulness I am now wielding the 'sword of the Spirit,' on the right hand and on the left. I bless God that it proves 'mighty to the pulling down of strong-holds.'"

With my present convictions of duty, and ideas of right and wrong, and believing, as I do, that the Gospel of Christ is opposed to war in all its forms, I could not take up the sword for any purpose whatever. I should not dare to make use of "carnal weapons," no matter how righteous I deemed the cause in which I desired to engage. But I cannot, dare not, condemn or vilify John Brown, or any other man, for taking up arms, and, if occasion demands, using them, in rescuing human beings from bondage! And surely if any excuse can be made, any apology offered for warfare, it is when it is conscientiously engaged in for the sake of delivering those who need help, but are unable to help themselves. And here I must most earnestly protest against the ideas of those shallow-minded hypocrites who justify and glory in the warlike deeds of others, but are so ready to heap infamy on the head of the old hero so recently sent to his account. Which of John Brown's defamers does not glory in Washington, in Kosciusko, in La Fayette? And yet their hands were steeped in blood, their swords were wielded in aggressive as well as defensive warfare! But they were only resisting a tyrannical "Stamp Act;" fighting for political liberty; contending for national independence! Washington was shedding blood to secure his own liberty and that of his countrymen. And Kosciusko and La Fayette, strangers and foreigners, thought it their duty to assist King George's rebellious subjects in carrying out their revolutionary ideas. Had that Revolution been crushed out, its leaders would have been regarded as TRAITORS, and the whole movement would no doubt have been spoken of as TREASON!

"Treason does never prosper; what's the reason?
Why when it prospers, none dare call it treason."

Who does not know that multitudes of those who condemn Brown, yes, and thousands of Southern despots, too, are overflowing with sympathy for Kossuth, Garibaldi and other fighting revolutionists: and are eager to contribute to the "million musket fund," in order that Italy and Hungary may become FREE? Suppose that even one hundred innocent WHITE men had been penned up in Virginia, forced to labor without compensation and to endure the most shameful indignities at the hands of their conquerors. How long would it be ere rescuing parties would set out for their relief? And who would not admire and honor the movement? Who would not trumpet abroad the fame of the leaders? What would become then of the scruples about "bloodshed," the ideas about "deeds of violence," which now so distress the minds of the faithful? I am then forced to the conclusion that it is not the fighting, nor the interference with tyrants, that is objected to. But it is the COLOR of the unfortunate race for whom the old man sacrificed his life! That is the reason why sympathy is withheld, why odium and contempt are lavished on those who are not afraid or ashamed to think, and speak, and act with reference to the matter!

But, leaving this inquiry as to John Brown's fighting propensities, I will finish the review of his claim to Christian character. He was A ZEALOUS STUDENT OF THE WORD OF GOD! And that, as I have shown, was the store-house whence he drew the arguments in justification of his course. He was indeed a man "mighty in the Scriptures." He knew by heart nearly every portion of the Sacred record; and he manifested his reverence for its teachings, by reading it daily with, and recommending it to, his family. He was A MAN OF PRAYER! In his camp in Kansas, as well as at his home, prayers were offered morning and evening; and he constantly sought Divine guidance before engaging in his terrible struggles with the foes of freedom. He seemed to have unbounded confidence that the "Lord of Hosts" was on the side of the oppressed, and would both hear and answer the petitions offered up in their behalf. In private life, he aimed not only to set a good example to others, but also to rebuke sin in its various forms. And as an instance of his faithfulness in this respect, it may be named that he would not at any time tolerate profanity. As to his religious affinities, it is recorded that early in life he became a member of a Congregational Church; but about thirty years ago he joined a Presbyterian Church, with which, it is said, he remained connected during the rest of his eventful life.

A word further as to his mysterious plan with reference to the invasion of Virginia. "He believed Slavery to be an institution accursed of God and man, and he considered himself to be Divinely appointed to bring about its destruction." One of his favorite passages of Scripture was well known to be, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them." His noble wife asserts that so

far from being actuated by a spirit of revenge on account of his Kansas wrongs, he had been "waiting a great many years for some opportunity to free the slaves." Said she, "He has borne the yoke of the oppressed, as if upon his own neck, FOR THIRTY YEARS!" And during his trial the old man remarked, "I deny everything but what I have all along asserted, of a design on my part to free slaves. I never did intend murder, or treason, or the destruction of property, or to excite slaves to rebellion, or to make insurrection." In fact the whole of his design could not be more forcibly or briefly described than in the words of the martyr Stephen, who in recounting the early history of Moses, said: "And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian; for he supposed that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not." (Acts, vii: 24, 25.)

As to Brown's insanity, about which so much has been said, it is a question almost too frivolous to be discussed. On this point also the testimony of his wife should have some weight. She says, "I never knew of his insanity till I read it in the papers. He has always been, and is now, in his right mind; but he has always acted upon his first perceptions of duty. His last act was the result, as all his other acts have been, of his truest and strongest conscientious convictions!" The attempt made at Harper's Ferry has been called a wild, a hasty, an insane adventure. True, it may appear so to most men. But to its projector, who can doubt that it appeared plausible, and capable of being fully carried out? And after all, it is not an easy matter to decide what is insanity, in this selfish and degenerate world! Long ago, some of the best and holiest of men were accused of "turning the world upside down." The false charge of madness is not a new one, when men have sought to rebuke sin or to overthrow oppression. Jeremiah was accused of madness, and it was suggested that he ought to be "put in prison, and in the stocks." To the eloquent Paul it was said, "much learning doth make thee mad!" And even of Paul's Divine Master it was asserted, "He hath a devil, and is mad!" So that John Brown, knowing the wildness of Southern schemes, and the insanity of attempting to defend or perpetuate Slavery, might well have replied to the charge:

"Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not *your trespass*, but *my madness* speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen!"

Having reviewed the life and character of John Brown, I will now notice briefly his FATE. What treatment has he received at the hands of those amongst whom he fell? What was reserved for so generous, so brave, so noble a specimen of manhood? Must another

er pure, benevolent and virtuous being be sacrificed on the altar of tyranny? Must he be bayoneted, sabred, mocked, chained, and strangled? Must another martyr be added to the long and mournful list? Must another saint—"of whom the world was not worthy"—be put out of the way of the tyrant—dispatched suddenly upon his journey to the far-off land? YES! It must be so! Virginia thus rewards heroes! Mercy has no dwelling-place in the heart of the oppressor! Truth and justice cannot find shelter in the house built by fraud, and propped up by violence and deceit! For Socrates, the poisonous cup must be prepared; for John the Evangelist, the boiling cauldron; for Galileo, the terrors of the Inquisition; for Latimer, the devouring flames: for JOHN BROWN, the ignominious gallows! Stern, unyielding, honest reformer! Thy fault was that thou didst love too well thy fellow man! The State of Virginia, in solemn mockery, finds John Brown "guilty of treason, robbery and murder." But it is evident that he was NOT GUILTY of either of those crimes! And that a Slave State, reared as it is on the bleeding bodies of so many thousands of bondmen, should be his accuser, is indeed "passing strange!" Virginia is guilty of TREASON of the worst, of the most daring kind; treason against the Court of High Heaven; treason, because she has assumed prerogatives belonging to God only! Jehovah says, "All souls are mine!" "Let the oppressed go free!" Virginia replies: "No! 500,000 of them are MINE; and I dare any man to take them away from my grasp!" The hypocritical State is also palpably guilty of ROBBERY and MURDER, and that on a most extensive scale. Let the man-stealing, slave-murdering operations carried on within her borders testify to that fact! If Virginia has a sincere desire to have her enactments respected, her laws obeyed, let her "cease to do evil, and learn to do well;" let her "seek judgment and relieve the oppressed." Laws written in blood, and tears, and groans, are no laws to the righteous man! Conflicting as they do with the HIGHER LAW, which tells him to "do justice and to love mercy," he is bound to trample them under foot, no matter what personal consequences may ensue!

The life and death of John Brown is a subject teeming with lessons of wisdom; a tragedy abounding in well-merited rebukes, and in solemn and much-needed warnings. "A just man has perished in his righteousness;" perished in attempting to "proclaim liberty to the captive." And Virginia is responsible for his murder! Though the "wicked man" may "prolong his life in his wickedness," a time of reckoning will surely come! A just God will not, cannot suffer such monstrous wickedness to go unpunished! "Know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment!" Is it supposed that the old hero's life was a mistake? His attempt at Harper's Ferry a FAILURE? "A failure?" No! It was a great and glorious SUCCESS! Note the effects of his adven-

ture, as developed throughout the South. See how far and wide the panic spreads! "Dred" has spoken from the tree-tops, and lo! "all faces are turned into paleness!" The Court House must be guarded with cannon; every stranger must be forced to depart; not a whisper of sympathy must be allowed; the troops from all parts must be summoned; even the Railroad must be seized; passports and countersigns must be provided; and terror, and confusion, and cowardice be thus displayed on every side, and wafted on the wings of every breeze! At the North the effects are just as marked and visible. At the first reports of the affair, incredulity; then merriment; then scorn; then intense excitement; then indignation, loud and long-continued, as the reckless and despotic doings of the Governor and his party are noted! And is it fancied that the panic at the South, or the excitement at the North, can be allayed now that the old man, "after life's fitful fever, sleeps well?" No! The death of John Brown will increase instead of allaying the excitement; will certainly precipitate the great struggle between Freedom and Slavery which **MUST** ere long take place! Two elements so antagonistic cannot long slumber side by side, cannot remain torpid amid the din and clamor of approaching war! God is on the side of Right and Justice: and "who shall stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" The cry is even now going forth, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Let us earnestly pray that the warfare which must be engaged in may be a moral and not a physical warfare. And as we do not believe in "carnal weapons," let us use the weapons furnished us. "Let us put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." Let us, as soldiers of the cross, prepare manfully for the contest; and, relying in the strength of the Lord, let us

"Grasp the weapons he has given,
The Light, and Truth, and Love of Heaven!"

The old hero has fought his last battle: and his body now sleeps in the cold embrace of death. But "he being dead yet speaketh!" His spirit, which still lives, and which shall still animate the friends of liberty, says to the nation, in tones of solemn warning: "Be wise in time! Put away the abomination from your midst! Cast the Achan out of the camp! Wipe out that stain which has so long defaced thy beauty! Remove that sin which is thy reproach and disgrace amongst the nations of the earth! And ye who profess to be the lovers of Truth, the standard-bearers of Freedom, listen not to those who cry 'Peace, peace! when there is no peace!' Put no faith in those who 'daub with untempered mortar,' and who seek to patch up their sins with excuses, and delays, and compromises! Stand up for the Right! Be ready at all times to defend and protect God's poor and stricken ones! Fear not to lift up a warning voice to all who need it! Knowing the will of your Father in

Heaven, hesitate not to proclaim it! Proclaim liberty to the poor captive, at home, as well as abroad! Speak boldly! Speak out!"

"If ye have whispered truth, whisper no longer;
Speak as the tempest does, sterner and stronger!"

We cannot look back upon the wondrous career of John Brown without mingled feelings of grief, and gratitude, and admiration. Admiration, because of the noble deeds which graced his life; gratitude, because of the lessons to be learned from his history; grief, because a true and valiant brother has passed away from our midst! But "we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." We look upward to that "House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens." And we believe that our brother has entered its portals, and has heard the welcome plaudit: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD!"

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